

consist of lead coffins, many of which are to be found in museums up and down the country, but notably at Colchester, Maidstone, and the British Museum. The use of lead coffins was fairly constant for persons of distinction right through the Middle Ages. Possibly the most elaborate ever made were those which were dug up years ago at the Temple Church, drawn by Richardson, and reburied. It is of the nature of things that such objects should be permanently hidden from our sight, but one or two remain visible, notably that of William de Warenne, which was made about 1150, and is ornamented by a network of cable mouldings. This form of ornament also appears in a modified form on the reliquary of St. Eanswith at Folkestone. My friend, Mr. Troup, has told me of a very singular case of unintelligent decorative survival. He was passing the shop of an undertaker and noticed a lead coffin which had just been completed. It was, of course, made of milled lead (not of cast sheets), but the tradition of reticulated ornament had remained. It was done simply by using a stencil, and scratching this network pattern through it with glass-paper. It was as feeble a way of imparting interest to a flat surface as can well be devised, but it seems to me to have extraordinary interest as showing the unintelligent persistence of a tradition which has survived so many hundred years. I have no doubt that if that undertaker had been informed that he was unconsciously imitating the maker of the coffin in which was buried a near relative of William the Conqueror, he would have been very profoundly astonished.

There is another form of sepulchral leadwork which is not very usual, namely, the heart case. There is an example in the British Museum, which once contained the heart of Sir Henry Sidney, and at Rouen Cathedral there still remains the oblong box which was the inmost receptacle of a magnificent casket of silver and gold which contained the heart of Richard Cœur de Lion.

Everyone is familiar with Papal Bulls, but perhaps not everyone knows that they take their name from the Bulla or leaden seal which has been the sign of their authenticity from the earliest times. They invariably, and under all Popes, have shown the same conventional decoration of rudely executed heads of Saint Peter and Saint Paul on one side, and on the other the name of the reigning pontiff. Until the middle of last century a leaden seal was used for every papal communication, but now

they are employed only for the more formal and important documents.

A charming study is that of the little lead tokens which were purchased at shrines by pilgrims in the Middle Ages. In these degenerate days people who go on holiday are apt to bring back to their homes very inferior vases of china bearing heraldic devices (not always correct) of the places which they have visited. In mediæval times one did not go to the seaside, but to the shrines of the most popular saints, such as St. Thomas, of Canterbury. As a token that you had, in fact, been there, you bought a little lead ornament which you pinned to your hat or the lapel of your coat, and, in the course of a long and pious life, you would acquire a large series of these objects. All the monasteries with shrines of at all a distinguished character, and particularly those which had relics efficacious in the cure of the sick people who visited them, made a very thriving business out of the sale of these tokens, and at one or two of the shrines there have been found the stone moulds in which these tokens were cast a dozen at a time. Nearly all museums have many of these little objects, but they are not always genuine.

Some fifty years ago two very ingenious navvies, known to archæologists as Billy and Charlie, manufactured them in enormous quantities, and sold them to the trustful public at prices more remunerative than honest. The museum of the London Guildhall has, in fact, a separate case devoted to what are known as the Dock Forgeries.

The next lecture will be devoted to the uses of leadwork in domestic architecture and in the garden.

SOME SPECIMENS OF HAUSA FOLKLORE.

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UNNATURAL PARENTS.

Some examples of Hausa animal tales* have been given elsewhere, and others about witches are to appear later†, but so far I have not seen anything in print about unnatural parents, and as the folklore of these people abounds in such stories, I venture to give translations of a few.

* *Journal of the Folklore Society*, June, September, &c.

† *Man* (R.A.I.).

I.

THE WICKED FATHER AND THE KIND SON.

There once was a certain man who had a son, and he was very poor and lived on jerboas.* Whenever he heard that there was a jerboa which could not be caught he would go and catch it. One day he was out catching jerboas, he and his son, and they came and dug out a jerboa. But the jerboa jumped up with a "Buroop" and escaped. Then he said, "As for me," so said (literally, let us hear) the father, "I who can beat anyone at catching jerboas (literally, I who am chief of the catchers) have allowed one to escape, I am disgraced." So he hit his son with a club, and he fell down with blood pouring from his nose. Then the father went away and left him. But a certain rich man came along; he had riches beyond avarice, but no son. So he came and took him and washed him with warm water, and he became his son. The rich man brought a horse and gave it to him, and he mounted; he brought a robe and gave it to him, and trousers. Then he took him to his own town, and said to the chief, "See, I have been on a journey and while on my travels I got a son." Then the chief said he was lying, it was not his own son. He said if the boy were his own son let him give the boy a horse a day for ten days and the chief would do the same with his son that they might race. When they had raced they should unsheath their swords and each should kill his horse for ten days running. That would mean ten horses each.† The rich man agreed, and when they had done thus the chief said, "He certainly is your son." Then the chief brought his daughter, and said, "Give her to him and let them marry." The second chief also brought his daughter, and said "Give her to him and let them marry." Then the boy was given a turban, and so became a man.

Now it came to pass that the father who had hit him with the club heard the news of his son, so came to him. And he came with a jerboa skin in front and a jerboa skin behind. When he had come he blessed the house of the rich man and asked the rich man to give him his son. But the rich man said, "I ask you to leave me in peace and I will give you ten slaves, ten horses, ten bulls, and ten mules." He said, "I will give you all, but the fact that

your son *is* your son you must conceal, for I have lied to the chief in saying that I got a son when on my travels. Take these gifts and go to your own town; whenever your son wishes to see you he shall come to you. I shall not take him from you by force, and I shall not sell him." But he said he would not agree, he, the father, the bearer of the jerboa skins. So he went and let out the secret. He went with his club to where a feast was being held, and poked his son, saying, "Throw away that turban, and come and eat jerboa." Then the rich man drew his sword and gave it to the boy to hold, and said, "Now, to-day I am disgraced before the whole town; I said you were my son, and see your father has come and says he will take you away." He said, "As for me, I do not value life now; take the sword, and kill either me or else your father." Then the boy cut down his father, and they went back into the town,* the rich man and the boy.

Now, for the sake of argument (let us argue), do you think the boy did right or evil?†

II.

THE TWO HALF-BROTHERS AND THE WICKED MOTHER.

This is about two women; both wives of the same man. After a time their husband died. Now, when he died he left them both with child, and in due course the women gave birth. Both brought forth sons, and the sons were exactly alike (their likeness one); they were as twins—neither mother could distinguish her own son.

After a time, when the boys were growing up, the mother of the rich boy died, and the possessions descended to her son. Then the other wife‡ wondered what she could do to kill the son and get the property. So she went to a magician. When she had come she said, "Oh! Magician, what shall I do to kill the boy?" Then he said, "On your return tell the boy to go to the forest with you; when you have gone, tell him to climb

* There is no mention of their having left the town, but such omissions are common.

† This last question is not really part of the story proper but is asked by the narrator. If one replies, "The boy did right," he at once says, "What? to kill his own father!" If one says "the boy did wrong," he replies, "What! you think he ought to have killed his benefactor?" The only way out of the difficulty is to refer the questioner to the spider, who is the king of beasts and the patron of all tales. A similar question is asked after all these four stories.

‡ The latest wife is always called the *kishia* (from *kishi*, jealousy) of the others for a sufficiently evident reason.

* A jerboa is something like a squirrel. Charms are made from various parts of the body.

† A very senseless proceeding apparently, but one which often appears in such stories, evidently a test of affection. Has it anything to do with former sacrifice?

a tree, and when he has climbed up seize him, and gouge out his eyes; then go home." When she had returned she said to the boy, "Come, let us go to the forest." So they went. When they had gone she said, "Now climb up." So the boy put his feet against the tree to climb, and she seized him and gouged out his eyes. Then she returned to her house.

Then the other boy, his brother, said, "Where is my brother?" But she said, "Oh, Goodness! I left him behind." So he was silent. Then she prepared the evening meal for her son, but he refused to eat. When he refused to eat she said, "What is the matter with you?" But the boy refused to talk. Then the boy went to search for his brother in the forest. And he went on and on calling, until he came upon his brother in a hole. So he pulled him out, and cried, and put mud on his eyes, and gave him water to drink. But it came to pass that God made the boy see. After a time they built a town and became its rulers. Then the mother heard the news that her sons had become rich, so she said, "Very well," and she went to where the boys were, and saluted them, and they responded. Then one, her son, said, "What does one do to his enemy?" Then the counsellors replied, "She should be killed." Then the son took a sword and cut down his mother.

III.

THE DETERMINED GIRL AND THE WICKED PARENTS.

This is about a girl named Fadam. It happened that a certain man wanted to marry her; she loved him too, but the parents of the girl did not want him, and the parents' people did not want him, so they refused. So she scooped up the whole of the water of the town stream* in a gourd, and climbed a tree. Thus in the town everyone was without water to drink. So people came and asked the girl, saying she should give them water. Then the girl said, "Who is asking?" They said, "Your mother;" so she said, "Oh no, I shall not give you any." This went on until people began to die, so people were again sent to the girl, and said, "Give us water to drink lest the whole town die." Then she said, "If I give you water to drink will you give me Musa in marriage?" They said "Yes." Then she descended and opened her gourd, and

the water flowed all over the town. So she was married, and in due course she gave birth to a child, a male. When she had brought forth her son she left him in the house, and the parents came and suffocated the child and killed it. When the girl returned she told her husband, so he said, "Very well; we shall be revenged." So the parents were summoned to attend the funeral rites. As for the husband, he dug a well, and covered its mouth with a mat, and when the parents had come he made them sit on the mat, and they fell into the well and were killed.

IV.

THE BRAVE MOTHER AND THE COWARDLY FATHER.

A certain boy was the only son of his mother. One day he came home and died. So the father wandered about everywhere seeking charms to raise him up again. Then a certain magician summoned him, saying, "Come here, I have a charm," and the magician said, "Go to the market of the Filani slaves who bring wood, and buy 100 bundles." So he bought 100 bundles of wood, and all were brought to one place and made into a stack like a house. Then people came and set fire to the pile, and the fire burnt up and died down, and the red hot embers were left. Then the boy's father was told to take off his clothes and to throw himself into the fire, and his son would come to life again. So the father said he would throw himself into the fire, and he came with a run, but he felt the heat, and went round the fire. Then he said, "Oh! Magician, must this be repeated twice?" He said, "It is to be repeated twice." So he came again with a run, but he again felt the heat, and went round the fire. Then the boy's mother became angry, and said, "Oh! Magician, can a woman do it?" And the magician said, "She can." Then the mother retired a little way and ran up with a rush. When she had come she jumped and fell into the fire head first. Then the fire turned into a house of gold, but the boy's father became a jerboa. Then the son came to life, and he was told, "Your father has been changed into a jerboa." He was told, "If you kill him you will live with your mother, if you do not kill him your mother will die." So the son caught the jerboa and killed him, and lived with his mother.

HAUSA VIRTUE.

Honesty amongst the Hausas is not always considered the best policy. Of the two next

* All Hausa towns are, of course, built on or near a stream. The Hausas have no idea of proportion.

tales, No. V. shows that trickery is often the more profitable, but in No. VI. right triumphs.

V.

FALSEHOOD PAYS BETTER THAN TRUTH.

This is about certain men, the King of Falsehood and the King of Truth. They started off, and were travelling together, when the King of Lies said to the King of Truth that he should get food for them that day. They went on and slept in a town; they did not get anything to eat. Next morning they started on the road. The King of Truth said to the King of Lies, "In the town where we shall sleep to-night you must get our food." The King of Lies said, "Agreed." They went on, and came to a large town. Lo, the mother of the chief of this town had died, and the whole town was crying, saying, "The mother of the chief of this town has died." So the King of Lies said, "What has caused you to cry?" So spoke the King of Lies. And they replied, "The chief's mother is dead." He said, "You go and tell the chief that his mother shall arise." Then the chief said, "Where are these strangers?" So spoke the chief. And the people said, "See them here." So they were taken to a large house and given it to stay in. In the evening the King of Lies went and caught a wasp, the kind of insect which makes a noise like "Kurururu." He came back and put it in a small tin, and said, "Let them go and show him the grave." When he arrived he examined the grave and said, "Let everyone go away." Then he opened the mouth of the grave slightly, he brought the wasp and put it in and closed the mouth as before. Then he called the chief and said he was to come and put his ear to the grave. Meanwhile this insect was buzzing. So the King of Lies said, "Do you hear your mother talking?" Then the chief arose; he chose a horse and gave it to the King of Lies; he brought women and gave him them, and the whole town began to rejoice because the chief's mother was going to rise again. Then the King of Lies asked the chief of the town, was it true that his father was dead also? He said, "Yes, he is dead." So he said, "Well, your father is holding your mother in the hole, they are quarrelling." Then the King of Lies said, "Your father if he comes out will take away the chieftainship from you." He said his father would also kill him. So the chief told the townspeople, and they piled up stones on the grave. Then

the chief said, "Here, King of Lies, go away; I give you these horses." He said, as for his mother he did not want her to appear either. Certainly falsehood is better than truth in this world.

VI.

VIRTUE PAYS BETTER THAN GREED.

The King of Good and the King of Evil started off for a journey. So the King of Evil said, "King of Good, you bring your food, and we shall continue eating it until we finish it, and then we shall eat mine." They travelled and travelled until the food of the King of Good was finished. So he said, "You now, King of Evil, bring your food." But the King of Evil refused, so the King of Good wasted away. They travelled and travelled until one day they slept at the foot of a large tree. Now there was a bird's nest at the top of the tree, and the bird there said, "The leaves of this tree" (the King of Evil was sleeping but the King of Good could not, for hunger was troubling him) the bird said, "This tree, whoever gathers its leaves," he said, "if he anoints the eye of a blind man it will be healed." Then the King of Good arose quietly, and went and picked the leaves of the tree and threw them into his bag, he continued gathering the leaves and throwing them into his bag until dawn came. Then they arose and went off, and came to a certain town. Lo, the son of the chief of this town was a blind man, so the King of Good went to the chief of the town and said, find him a blind man and he would heal him (literally, open eyes for him). Then the chief said, "Are you able (have you medicine) to heal the eyes?" He said, "How much shall I have to give you if you heal my son's eyes for me?" Then the King of Good said, "A million" (cowries). So the chief said, "Agreed; wait till to-morrow." When day had dawned, the King of Good said, "Let them be brought to another room, the two of them only; besides himself only the chief's son could be present." So they were brought to another room. Then the King of Good said to give him a little water in a gourd, and he took some medicine and mixed it and rubbed the blind man's eyes until they were healed. Then the chief of the town said, "Since you have healed my son's eyes for me, you shall be my deputy." So he was made the deputy ruler of the town; half the town came under the deputy. As for him, he took the King of Evil and killed him.

UNNATURAL CHILDREN.

The following three tales give a fair idea of the stories told of unnatural children. No. IX. reminds one somewhat of Samson and Delila, but has a happier ending.

VII.

There was once a certain maiden who loved a youth, but her parents said that they would not give her to him. He was always coming and begging them to let him marry her, but they would say, "We shall not give her to you." So the maiden came to him and said, "I have come to you to ask you to give me your knife so that I may go and kill my mother, then we can run away to some other town and get married." But he said "Oh! no." Again she came and said, "Give me your knife, that I may go and kill my mother." But he replied, "Oh! no; you must not kill your mother because of me." He said, "Go home and stay there. Those who will give your parents' presents will give you some also."*

Five days passed and then the maiden again asked, "Will you give me your knife to cut pumpkins?" Now the boy forgot, and he pulled out his knife and gave it to her. On receiving it she went and cut her mother's throat, and said, "Now, you see I have done it; if we do not escape you and I will be killed. Look at the blood on your knife, I have cut my mother's throat." So they fled, and the youth took a bow and arrows, put the maiden in front of him†, and they escaped.

They were pressing on towards the forest; they slept and they pushed on until, when they reached the centre of the forest, the maiden was seized with an internal pain, and she fell down and died. Then the youth drew out one of his arrows and fitted it to the bow and stood and guarded her. The beasts of the forest all assembled to eat her, but he would not allow them. He said nothing should touch her unless he should first be killed. Then the eagle came and alighted in front of the youth and said, "Let us feast." But he said, "Oh no, did I not promise that I should not leave her? shall I allow you to eat her body?" The eagle answered, "Do not put your trust in women, they are not truthful." But the youth said, "No, I trust this one." Then the eagle said, "Have you a flask?" He

said, "I have." The eagle said, "Give me it," and he took it and flew off with it. Soon he returned with water in the flask, and said, "Have you a knife?" and he said, "Yes." The eagle said "Separate her teeth." Then the eagle plucked out two feathers from his wings and stirred them around in the water. Then the maiden's mouth was opened and the water poured in, and the maiden rose up. Then the eagle said, "See these feathers, keep them, when you go to another town and obtain something to eat, some time you will repay us for our feast which we have lost."

So they went off and reached a town, and came to the house of an old woman, where they entered and remained until the afternoon. They slept in the town. Next morning they heard weeping; it was said that the chief's mother had died. Then the youth arose and said, "Let me go and see." So he went and came to where the death had taken place. When he had come he went up to a man and said, "Can you obtain for me an interview with the chief?" He replied, "The chief's heart is broken, is anyone going to bother him now?" But another said, "Here, do you know what his business is? Go and ask him indeed." The chief, when he had heard, said, "Summon the youth to come." So he was called, and he came, and said, "If I bring your mother back to life, what will you give me?" Then one of the attendants said, "Have you ever seen anyone who has died come back to life?" But the chief said, "Leave him alone, perhaps he has some magic;" and he said to the youth, "I will give you ten slaves." He said, "See, this house also will I give you, and these horses." So the youth said, "Very well, bring me water in a flask," and water was obtained and brought to him. Then he walked around to the back of the house and stirred the eagle's feathers around in the water and brought it back, and said, "Now open the chief's mother's mouth." Immediately after the water had been poured down her throat she rose up and remained alive, so the youth's presents were brought and given to him. Then he returned to his house and remained in the town, and wherever anyone died, someone would come and summon him to give the dead person a charm to come back to life again.

Now one of the chief's slaves persuaded the maiden to commit adultery, and he said: "Of a truth, maiden, since we know each other so well will you not give me your husband's magic?" She said, "Very well." So when

* i.e., If rich enough to pay the marriage fee for you, they will be able to give you plenty as well.

† Hausas always walk in Indian file, of course, the men being behind, unless danger be ahead.

she went to bed and her husband talked she remained silent; when he asked her anything she did not reply. So her husband said, "What is the matter with you?" Then she said, "Well, we have been together for some time, but you have got something which you are keeping secret from me; you are always hiding it." Then he said, "Is it only that which has made you so quiet? Well, here it is; keep it for me." So he gave the maiden the eagle's feathers. When she had received them she took a water-pot, and said she was going to the river. But she went and gave them to the chief's slave, who took them to his house.

On the day when another death took place in the chief's family, the youth was summoned, and he came and said to his wife, "Where is the thing I gave you to keep?" And she said, "It is here, I put it here." They looked but did not find it; they looked again but did not find it. Then the chief's slave went and said to the chief, "If I make him rise up again how much will you give me?" The chief replied, "Everything that you want I will give you." So he said "Very well," and he made the dead man rise up. When he had done this the chief's slave asked that the magician should be seized and given to him as a slave, and the chief said, "Very well, go and seize him." So he went and seized him, and then the wife married the chief's slave who seized the magician and put handcuffs on him and took him to the forest and made him clear the ground.

One day the eagle came to where he was and said, "Where is what you promised me? I told you that the woman was not faithful, but you said she was. Now let me do you another good turn. At night hold your leg-irons up to your thighs* and go into the town and find me a cat." So he went and found a cat, and he came and hid the cat until daybreak. Then the eagle came and said, "The reason why we sought you, O Cat, is that we want you to get us a mouse." So the cat said, "Very well," and immediately she ran in where the people had been cutting wood and caught a mouse. Then the eagle said, "O Cat, and you, O Mouse, you know the smell of my feathers. Take the road, go into the town, and enter the house of the chief's slave, and if the mouse sees any feathers you, O Cat, take them and bring them here." So they went to the town and

entered the chief's slave's house. The mouse looked everywhere, in the pots, in the quiver,* but did not see them, and she went outside to the cat and said, "I cannot see them." Then the cat said, "Return, go and look again;" and the cat entered and cried out "Miau." Then the sleepers said, "Thank God, she will catch that mouse for us which has been preventing our sleeping." So they went to sleep, both the chief's slave and his wife. Then the mouse came and sniffed the slave's mouth, and saw where the feathers were, so she said to the cat, "Here they are; I see them." She said, "Where do you see them?" The mouse replied "In his mouth." Then she said "Very well, go and bite him," so the mouse went and bit him, and he went "Pouf," the feathers fell out and the cat caught them and took them to the magician in the forest. Now in the morning the eagle came and said, "Where are they?" and he said, "See them." Then the eagle said, "Good, but let me have another understanding. Some day you must pay me back for my feast which I gave up."

Now it happened that next day another of the chief's sons became ill and died. Then the chief's slave was sent for and summoned to work his magic. But he said he had lost his charm. Then the chief said, "Summon the other one to come. Here is a horse, go quickly and bring him who is in the forest." He was sent for quickly and was brought, and the chief said, "See we have summoned you. May God cause your power to return to you." He replied, "How can one who lives out in the forest obtain magic?" The chief said, "For God's sake, help us." Then he said, "Very well, but what will you give me?" The chief replied, "Everything that is in the slave's house I will give you." Then the youth prepared his charm and raised up the dead one, so the chief said "Go and seize the slave." So the youth went and caught the slave and his wife; he undid the handcuffs and put them on the slave, he took another pair and put them on the wife, and then he took them to the place where he had been cutting wood, and said they were to stack it all in one place. Then he sent to the eagle to come; and when he had come he said, "Go and assemble all your relatives, to-morrow we shall meet at the clearing." Next morning the eagles collected; all the birds assembled, and all the beasts of the forest also came. Then he said,

* The only way of progression, of course.

* Every man in these unsettled districts keeps a bow and arrows always ready to hand.

"Now set fire to the pile." So they set fire to it; the fire consumed all the wood, and left a great mass of embers. Then he said to the slave and his wife, "Get up and fall into the fire." But they refused. So he told his attendants to get up and drag them in, and they threw them into the fire, and every time they got out they were thrown in again until they were cooked. Then he told the attendants to pull them out of the fire, and they were put out in the open. Then he said, "Eagle!" He replied, "Um!" He said, "Now, see, here is your feast." So he mounted his horse and returned to the town.

It is certainly true that women are not faithful.

VIII.

THE PRECOCIOUS CHILD.

A certain man went to borrow some money. His wife was with child. After three days the woman gave birth. When she had been delivered the son was taken and put upon the bed. Then he from whom his father had obtained a loan came to ask for his property. When he had saluted the house he received no reply, for no one was at home, but the little boy who had been born answered and said, "Let us go, my father is not here. Let us go to the court. I shall recover a loan from another, and I shall give you it." So the creditor took the baby on his shoulder, and said, "Very well, we will go to the owners of the mighty mouths (*i.e.*, whose utterances have weight) that they may do us justice." The baby, when he had come to where the dye-pits were, stopped. The creditor said, "Get up and let us go." The baby said, "You said we should go to those whose mouths are mighty: are there any mouths which are greater than these?"

Then the creditor said, "Very well, let us get up and go to those who have red eyes." When the baby came to the pepper tree he stopped. The creditor said, "Get up and let us go on." But the baby said, "Oh, no, you said we should go to the red-eyed ones: are there any eyes that are redder than peppers?"

The creditor said to the baby, "Get up, let us go to those who have large ears." When they had come to the gwaza plant† the baby

stopped. The creditor said, "Get up." But the baby said, "Oh, no, are there any ears which are larger than the gwaza?"

Then the creditor said, "Let us go to the Elders that they may decide between us." So they came to the chief, and the chief said, "Had I someone to shave me I would decide between you." Then the baby said, "Bring water that I may do it for you," and water was brought. Now the baby had five millet heads, and he said, "See this millet, pull the grain off for me."

When he had taken the razor he shaved the chief. Then the chief said, "Baby." He said, "Yes." The chief said, "Put back my hair on me that I may judge between you." Then the baby said, "Very well, put back the millet for me which you have plucked off, then I shall put back your hair on you." Then the chief said, "Heavens! as for this baby, it is not I who can (shall be able to) judge him. Here, Creditor, take him back to his father's house, do not ask him again for your debt." Then the creditor said, "Very well, Baby, let us return home. I cannot go to law with you."

So they returned and the creditor said to the father, "I shall leave you in peace with your property because of your son."

IX.

WHY THE STRONG MAN LOST HIS STRENGTH.

There was a certain youth, a giant, as high as from Jemaan Daroro to Kano or Bauchi; amongst all the others there was not his like. Now a priest had given him a charm and had said he must never know a woman. If a giant came, no matter whence, if he came then he (this youth) killed him while boxing.

Now there was a certain girl, a virgin, who was as tall as Sokoto* is distant from here; men used to leave places like Damarghera and go to see the girl because of her beauty. Supposing the Chief of Damarghera said he wanted her she would say she did not want him. Supposing the Chief of Zungo (Mallam Yerro) came to her she would say she did not want him.

One day she heard the news of this youth, and she said she would go to him. So she started and commenced the journey; she was two months travelling. Then she came to the youth, and when the youth saw her he said he wanted her. So he took her and led her to

* Possibly a reference to the fact that much study affects the eyes, but doubtful, although my informant told me that this was the meaning.

† A very bitter edible root, with a long stalk and very wide leaves.

* Pronounced Sokkoto.

his house, and married her. Now for the next day a great tournament had been arranged, so the youth went out and showed off. And another came from somewhere else, and he also showed off. Then they came and got to close quarters, and the stranger caught the youth's hand, and he watched his armpit, and when he punched him he killed him.

Now, when they saw this they came and said, "Girl, see him whom you came to has been killed in the tournament." Then the girl said, "What is the remedy for this?" Then it was said that there was a remedy. A hole was dug, and it was said that if the girl came and entered this hole and was buried inside, the youth would arise again. So she agreed, and was buried in the hole, and the youth arose, and the girl who had been buried in the grave arose with him; and the grave became an iron house. Inside this iron house of the things in all the world there was not anything wanting, so they settled down and were married.

THE AJWÁN OR OMUM PLANT OF INDIA.

The remedial virtues of this plant, although known and highly appreciated in India and the East generally from quite remote ages, do not appear to have attracted any attention in Europe until between thirty or forty years ago. Even then it seems to have met with but scant and passing notice as an aromatic curiosity of no particular account. Just lately, however, interest in the Ajwán has somewhat revived, and as, the writer understands, it is being tried in Russia with, so far, remarkable success, as a remedy for and a prophylactic against cholera, it is not unlikely to become very widely known later on.

Ajwán, Ajowan, the *Kamun-el-muliki*, or sometimes the *Tilib-el-Khubz* of Arabian writers, otherwise Ajwain (*Hindu*), Omán (*Tamil*), and the famous Nánkwa of Persia—thus named by reason of its effect in improving the appetite and aiding digestion*—is described by various Sanscrit authorities under the name of Yamani. There seems no doubt, however, that the same plant constituted the esteemed *ἄμμι* of the Greeks. A rather curious phonetic coincidence lies in the fact that an English scientist has recently found Ajowan seed a powerful bacillicide,† rendering several species of bacteria sterile, or practically uncultivable, while Dioscorides tell us that the favourite synonym for *ἄμμι* was *βασιλικὸν κύμινον*.

Amongst other Indian vernacular names for Ajwán,

* *Nin* - "bread" or "food," and *Kiwah* "desire."

† The fact—referred to further on—that its essential oil contains some 35 per cent. of *Thymol*, would alone be sufficient to account for this.

may be cited Omamu and Vamamu (*Telugu*), Ajvain (*Bengali*), Vova, or Vova-sada (*Mahratta*), Sambum (*Burmese*), and Omam or Assamodagon (*Cingalese*).

Botanically Ajwán is known as *Carum copticum*, formerly designated *Ptycotis ajowan*, one of the *Umbelliferae*, and is closely allied to the plant yielding the familiar caraway seeds (*Carum carui*) of our cakes and confectionery. Indeed, Roxburgh in his "Flora Indica" thus speaks of it:—"This is one of the most useful, and at the same time grateful of the umbelliferous tribe. It is much cultivated in Bengal during the cold season. I never saw it wild. The seeds, like those of caraway, have an aromatic smell, and warm, pungent taste; they are much used by both natives and Europeans for culinary and medicinal purposes; they are amongst the smallest of the umbelliferous order, and to be met with in every market in India."

The details of the plant itself have thus been defined:—Stem erect, dichotomous; leaves few, cut into numerous linear or filiform segments, the uppermost simply pinnate; umbel with seven to nine rays; involucre few-leaved; leaflets linear, entire; fruit strongly ribbed, covered with small blunt tubercles.

Dymock says:—"The fruits are of the size and shape of those of parsley, of a greyish-brown colour, with a tubercular surface. Each mericarp has five prominent ridges, the intervening channels being dark brown with a single ditto in each. The commissural side bears two ditto. The odour resembles that of thyme."

Dr. Stenhouse found that Ajwán or Ajowan seed contain somewhat over 5 per cent. of an aromatic essential oil having a density of about .895-6. A crystalline stearoptene which separates on exposing the oil to a low temperature is specially prepared at Oojein, and some other Indian districts, and widely sold in the bazaars under the title of "Ajwain-Ka-phul," Anglice—"flowers of Ajwán." Stenhouse says that Ajwain-Ka-phul is identical with the pure Thymol yielded by our familiar herb *Thymus vulgaris*. The writer, however, who examined Ajwán, and the Ajwain-Ka-phul a short time ago, found that the latter contained at least 6 to 8 per cent. of other oils in mixture or combination with Thymol. The local value of Ajwain-Ka-phul appears to range from about eight to twelve rupees per British pound avoirdupois.

While even by very careful distillation with water the total yield of essential oil from Ajwán seldom exceeds 5.7 to 5.8 per cent. of the dry seed, according to the experiments of the present writer as much as 7.2 has been obtained, by exhaustive extraction with petroleum ether, and subsequent separation, by appropriate methods, of the fixed oils and resinoid matters also taken up by the ether. The pure volatile oil is composed of: Thymol, 38.86 per cent.; Hydride of Cinnamyl, 2.10 per cent., with from 46 to 49 per cent. of Cymene, the balance consisting of various phenols and oxida-